

**The Long Term Care Coordinating Council
Aging in Community Subcommittee**

MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, June 24, 2015

9AM-10:30AM

SHALOM APARTMENTS MULTIPURPOSE COMMUNITY ROOM

1 Shalom Drive, Warwick RI

1. In attendance: Heather Amaral, Bernie Beaudreau, Barbara Capalbo, Catherine Cool Rumsey, Meghan Connelly, Joyce Dolbec, Craig Dwyer, Rachel Fillinson, Bill Flynn, Cathy Gorman, Judy Jones, Kathy McKeon, Connie Milbourne, Mary Lou Moran, Nicholas Oliver, Paula Parker, Susan Pomfret, Marianne Raimondo, Michael Walker
2. Ms. Parker introduced Meghan Connelly, the new CIO for the Division of Elderly Affairs. Meghan will be working on all forms of the Division's communications including the website.
3. Upon motion of Kathy McKeon, the minutes from April 29, 2015 were approved as distributed via email.
4. Focus Group Summary
Drs. Marianne Raimondo and Connie Milbourne provided a handout summarizing the 6 focus groups that have been conducted to date.
 - 64 persons participated in the focus groups.
 - 48 female, 16 males
 - Ages 65 – 97 years (except one person age 50)
 - Extremely high value placed on services offered by Senior Centers with key role they play in socialization and psychosocial support
 - Needs and Gaps
 - Financial concerns (present and future)
 - Transportation
 - Lack of Housing
 - Enhanced services at senior centers
 - Loneliness and “alone-ness”
 - Dissatisfaction with DHS customer service
 - Respect for seniors in society as a whole and by health care and other service providers (Ageism)
 - Possible Solutions

- Improve reliability of current Transportation program, consider use of school buses
- Innovative housing models such as shared living (e.g. “Golden Girls)
- Grandfathering in of property taxes
- Offering financial planning services and money management assistance
- Expanded home-based services (chronic disease management, companionship, behavioral health, barber and hairdressing, health coaches)

Ms. Maigret noted a 7th focus group was scheduled for the following day in Newport with participants age 75 and over. Also, one is being planned for northern RI communities not included in the focus group done at Landmark Medical Center. There was also a request to do one in South County with participants not representing the communities at the Richmond Center focus group. This request will be held until September. Dr. Raimondo noted that Ms. Maigret had done the recruiting of participants. Dr. Raimondo noted that additional next steps will include interviews with aging services staff, analysis of data with final report and development of a plan to address the needs and gaps identified.

Ms. Maigret recognized and thanked other subcommittee members including Mary Lou Moran, Joyce Dolbec and Susan Pomfret for their help in recruitment and coordination.

5. Discussion of Older Volunteerism Research and Opportunities for RI

Bernie Beaudreau, Executive Director, SERVE RI, discussed research on older volunteerism specific to RI and a project he will be implementing to increase the numbers of older volunteers. (Handout attached)

- National survey findings show RI is lagging in volunteering . It ranked 48th in volunteering by persons 65+. Reasons not clear, but there are several theories.
- 3yrs ago Serve RI did something many said they shouldn't do, too risky--- recruited volunteers to help snow shovel out isolated seniors and disabled folks. Blizzards of 2015 produced several thousand calls for help. Vetting volunteers took time but they were able to help about 480 households. During the process, Serve RI's phone lines were overwhelmed, and they are working on an automated system to handle a variety of requests for help. Many senior callers wanted to discuss more than their need for snow shoveling. They wanted to tell their stories about how isolated and lonely they were.
- Serve RI will be doing some focus groups in connection with crafting a 3-year state plan for volunteerism that they must submit to the feds. He noted that the RI Organizing Project and Senior Agenda, and other groups will be collaborating with him. He promised to reach out to the people at this meeting to learn more about their ideas on how to increase senior volunteering.

6. Civic Engagement and Older Persons Pew Research –

Ms. Maigret distributed a handout (Attachment 2) showing national research done by the Pew Foundation on civic and political engagement by age groups and whether persons were using social networking on these activities. There was a dramatic drop off in older persons using internet for political activities and even

more so in use of Social Networking in connection with these activities.

7. Future Meetings Schedule – Ms. Maigret said the group will reconvene in September after a summer break at a date TBD,

ATTACHMENT 1

Civic Engagement and Healthy Seniors: Building a Strategy and Plan to Increase Volunteerism and Service Among Rhode Island's 55 Plus Age Groups

This proposed collaborative planning and community organizing effort is warranted by the fact that relative to our neighboring states, Rhode Island suffers from a lack of participation of our older adults and seniors in volunteerism and civic participation. Not only does the state miss out on the contributions of this age group, the seniors themselves are missing out on the health and social benefits of volunteering.

In the context of developing its 2016-2018 State Service Plan, Serve Rhode Island intends to partner with the Rhode Island Department of Elderly Affairs and Senior Agenda to undertake a 6-month planning and organizing process that will: a) create a three-year plan for improving senior volunteerism and b) engage more nonprofit and government leaders and volunteers in a renewed campaign to engage more of our older Rhode Islanders into volunteer service.

The Need: RI's Older Adults Underrepresented Among Volunteer Ranks

One of our state's hidden resources for strengthening communities and rebuilding our economy is the wealth of untapped potential volunteers who are not engaged in service. This is especially true for our older adult population.

While there are about 65,000 volunteers ages 55 plus already engaged in service in Rhode Island – an impressive number by itself -- we are unfortunately about 24,000 volunteers short of where we should be, when comparing RI's volunteer rates to our New England neighboring states.

Volunteer rates among Rhode Island's older population trails our neighboring states and the country as a whole. In fact, Rhode Island ranks 48th among states for its older adult volunteer rate of 18.5 percent among the age group 65 and older. Nationally, 24.2 percent of older adults volunteer.

Why should this be of concern for Rhode Island? Simply put, our state NEEDS the benefit and positive community impact of these 24,000 older adults, seniors and elders. The annual dollar value of their missing contribution to RI economy

is estimated to be \$29 million.¹ While we are missing their contributions addressing a wide spectrum of community needs they are themselves missing out on the benefits inherent in volunteering as well.

Health Benefits of Volunteering

It is well documented that volunteering is not only helpful to the community, but has beneficial health effects on the volunteers themselves, especially among older adults, seniors and elders². Volunteering among older adults age 65 and older has a positive effect on mental health due to the personal sense of accomplishment that an individual gains from their volunteer activities³. For age 65 and older, volunteering is related to lower levels of depression⁴ and those who volunteer at an earlier stage in life are less likely to suffer from ill health later in life⁵. For many ages 55 to 64, volunteering may be a relative new focus, which may introduce a cycle of good health and future volunteering.

Theories About Low Volunteer Rates Among Older Adults, Seniors and Elders

For the purpose of thinking about plans and strategies for increasing volunteerism of our older population, there are perhaps at least three distinct groups among the 55 plus population for which new strategies must be developed for increasing civic participation: Older Adults ages 55 to 64, Seniors ages 65 to 74, and Elders ages 75 and older. Each of these demographic groups are deserving of specific strategies for increasing civic participation, volunteerism and service appropriate to their age cohort.

While there are few definitive studies analyzing the factors related to increased volunteering among older adults, seniors and elders, it is logical to imagine that there are several factors that influence the level of volunteering among these age groups:

- Lack of availability of suitable and appropriate volunteer opportunities for older age groups
- Lack of support for assisting elders, including transportation and accompaniment, to participate in volunteer opportunities
- Lack of capacity of nonprofits to accommodate senior and elder volunteers

¹ \$29 million represents 1.3 million “missing” volunteer hours multiplied by the average volunteer hourly value of \$22.21 per hour calculated by Volunteering in America 2013 Report.

² See: The Health Benefits of Volunteering: A Recent Review of Recent Research. Corporation for National and Community Service 2007

³ Herzog, A.R., Franks, M.M., Markus, H.R. and Holmberg, D. (1998) “Activities and Well-Being in Older Age: Effects of Self-Concept and Educational Attainment.” *Psychology and Aging*, 13(2): 179-185.

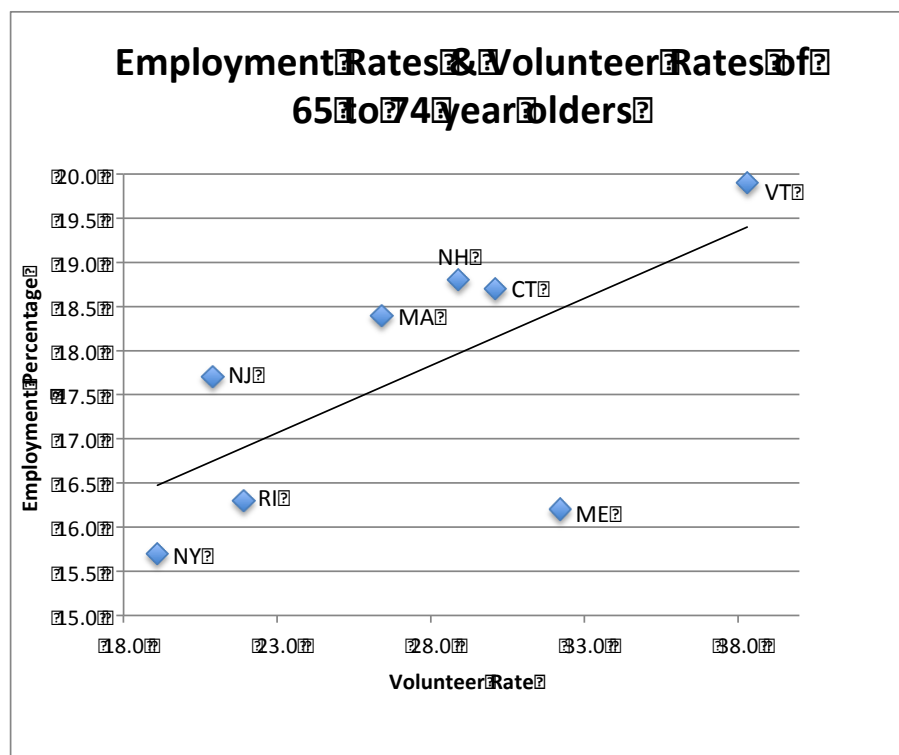
⁴ Musick, M. and Wilson, J. (1999) “Volunteering and Depression: The Role of Psychological and Social Resources in Different Age Group.” *Social Science and Medicine*, 56(2): 259-269.

⁵ The Health Benefits of Volunteering: A Recent Review of Recent Research. Corporation for National and Community Service 2007, page 7.

- Lack of care/skill in matching of volunteer skills and experience with needs in community
- Lack of motivation and/or ability of older adults, seniors and elders to volunteer
- Lack of outreach and promotion of the health benefits and the general idea of volunteering
- Lack of innovative programming of new areas for volunteering such as elder-youth mentoring, elder stories of career development, etc.
- Lack of available research on best national practices in older adult, senior and elder volunteering
- Lack of economic security of older adults dampening volunteer spirit

On this last point, some might suggest that maybe in Rhode Island, where more households are financially insecure, our older adults don't have enough time to volunteer because more of them are working. Actually, the opposite is true. When employment rates of 65 years and older adults are compared to volunteer rates across northeastern states, a positive relationship is found: higher employment rates correlate with higher volunteer rates. See figure below. This positive relationship between work and volunteering is true for all other age cohorts, which suggests that economic insecurity dampens participation as employment, as an element of community and economic engagement, strengthens volunteer activity. Ironically, those who could use the benefits of volunteering most are discouraged to do so by their relative poorer sense of overall well-being.

Figure 1. Employment rates and volunteer rates.



Learning from Rhode Island Practitioners in Volunteerism & Senior Volunteers

One obvious approach to learning more about why older Rhode Islanders are volunteering at relatively low rates is to ***engage in an active dialogue with the network of nonprofits and senior corps agencies*** that are most involved with senior programs and volunteering. National Service through the Corporation for National and Community Service Senior Corps programs (R.S.V.P., Senior Companions and Foster Grandparents) have decades of experience engaging older Americans into volunteer service. Learning from them and their coordinators is the first order of business in the steps that Serve Rhode Island must take to develop a state plan for engaging more older adults, seniors and elders in community volunteer service.

In addition to Senior Corps sites, Serve Rhode Island has identified 33 Rhode Island nonprofits that have identified volunteer opportunities specifically friendly to older adults and seniors. Engaging these organizations in dialogue about increasing older adult, senior and elder volunteer opportunities is also key to building a foundation of best practices and strategic thinking for the state service plan. These nonprofits are listed in the table below.

Finally, community conversations with older adults, seniors and elders themselves will be a critical component of discovering what works for the target population in terms of engagement in volunteer service.

Proposed Planning Process for Spring-Summer 2015

During the months of May through October, Serve Rhode Island, in collaboration with the Rhode Island Division of Elderly Affairs, will engage key stakeholders, practitioners, senior volunteers and the general public in a dialogue about the volunteer and service needs of our state's 55 years and older population, with particular focus on the 65 to 74 years age group. With the Division, we will form a Planning Committee to support the process and to review data and develop 3-year goals and strategies for the state service plan. We will use on-line surveys, community meetings and individual meetings with key stakeholders. The proposed timeline for this planning process will be:

August/September:

1. Convening of Planning Committee (Serve Rhode Island & RI Div. Elderly Affairs)
 - a. Development of research questions and planning objectives
 - b. Agreement on planning process and schedule
2. Outreach and interviews with the 8 Senior Corps Sponsors
 - a. Overall trends and concerns of senior corps volunteers
 - b. Develop database for surveying volunteers & host sites

3. Surveys: Outreach and interviews with top 33 Senior-Friendly Nonprofits including Senior Corps Sponsors (listed below); On-line survey of 425 Senior Corps site managers.

October:

4. Analysis of Survey Data, Findings & Research of National Best Practices; Consultation with Janice Blanchard and other policy experts

October/November:

5. Community Dialogue: Conversations with small groups of older adults, seniors and elders.

November:

6. Development of Goals, Strategies & Action Plans (One or two meetings with Planning Committee); Writing of Plan and Best Practice Guidelines for Nonprofits

**Target Agencies & Senior Corps Sponsor for Participating in Serve Rhode Island/Division of Elderly
Affairs State Service Plan for Seniors & Elders**

Organization Name	City/Town	Employee s	Volunteers	Needed Vols 12 Mnths	Senior Corps
East Bay Community Action	East Providence	-	-	-	863
Southern Rhode Island Volunteers	South Kingstown	-	-	-	858
Westbay Community Action	Warwick	80	1,300	200	842
Federal Hill House	Providence	47	22	12	365
Blackstone Valley Community Action	Pawtucket	-	-	-	329
City of Cranston Senior Center	Cranston	-	-	-	284
RI Department of Elderly Affairs	Cranston	-	-	-	66
West Warwick Senior Center	West Warwick	-	-	-	57
Partnership for Providence Parks	Providence	4	2,000	500	-
Child & Family Services	Middletown	250	120	100	-
Roger Williams Park Zoo	Providence	136	258	100	-
South County Habitat for Humanity	Charlestown	10	420	50	-
Meals on Wheels of RI, Inc.	Providence	29	650	50	-
Audubon society of RI	Smithfield	25	150	50	-
American Cancer Society	Warwick	19	500	50	-
Literacy Volunteers of Kent County	Coventry	2	67	30	-
Blithewold Mansion, Gardens & Arboretum	Bristol	18	175	25	-
McAuley Ministries	Providence	10	100	25	-
Rhode Island Blood Center	Providence	350	100	25	-
Ronald McDonald House of Providence	Providence	8	250	25	-
Families First RI	Cranston	5	50	20	-
Rhode Island Wild Plant Society	North Kingstown	1	120	20	-
RISE	Providence	2	99	20	-
Family Service of Rhode Island	Providence	332	30	15	-
INSIGHT	Warwick	14	50	12	-
Visiting Nurses of Newport and Bristol Cnty	Portsmouth	240	45	10	-
HeadsUp, Inc.	Providence	2	15	10	-
The Jonnycake Center of Westerly	Westerly	26	81	10	-
Maxwell House	Warren	0	12	8	-
Ocean State Animal Coalition	Warwick	15	10	8	-
Saint Elizabeth Manor	Bristol	50	32	5	-
The Art Connection-RI	Providence	0	10	4	-
New England Wireless and Steam Museum	East Greenwich	25	30	3	-
TOTALS		1,700	6,696	1,387	3,664

Note: green highlighted agencies are Senior Corps Sponsors.

Planning Budget:

Budget for Developing State Service Plan for Senior Volunteerism

Serve RI Exec. Dir. @ 20% for 5 months (sal+fringe)	\$11,900
Senior Agenda Exec. Dir. @ 5 consultant days @ \$500/day	\$2,500
travel @200 miles/month x 5 months @ \$.50/mile	\$500
Supplies/refreshments for community meetings	\$500
Production & dissemination of Plan	\$500
TOTAL	\$15,900

SRI's Organizational Capacity & Staffing:

This state service planning process is a requirement of all state commissions for national and community service. As such, Serve Rhode Island undergoes this process every three years and has the experience of convening collaborating partners, conducting and analyzing surveys and developing three-year plans that have guided the program development and operations of the organization. The principal investigators/planners will be Bernie Beaudreau, Executive Director of Serve Rhode Island, and William Flynn, Executive Director of the Senior Agenda Coalition. Beaudreau and Flynn have many years experience in community planning and organizing and nonprofit management and strategic planning.

Impact of Planning Process: Building A Senior Civic Engagement Movement in RI

The intention of this planning effort is to engage organizations and leaders who have been involved with senior issues and civic participation of seniors to create a new vision and renewed energy for creating a quality of living that builds upon community connectivity and engagement through volunteer service. The articulation of a state service plan that captures new energy and vision for senior civic engagement is key to this process. It is anticipated that an ongoing coalition of leaders will convene regularly to continue to develop collaborative efforts, pilot projects and general support for efforts that will directly engage older adults, seniors and elders into volunteer service.

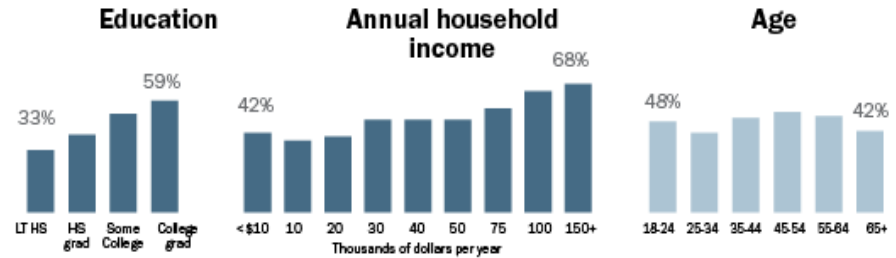
ATTACHMENT 2

Online traditional political activities are most popular among the well-educated and the financially well-off

Education and income, more so than age, influence people's civic involvement. Percent involvement by each group

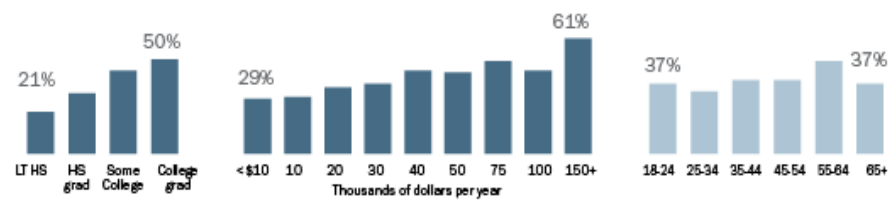
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Directly involved with civic group or activity



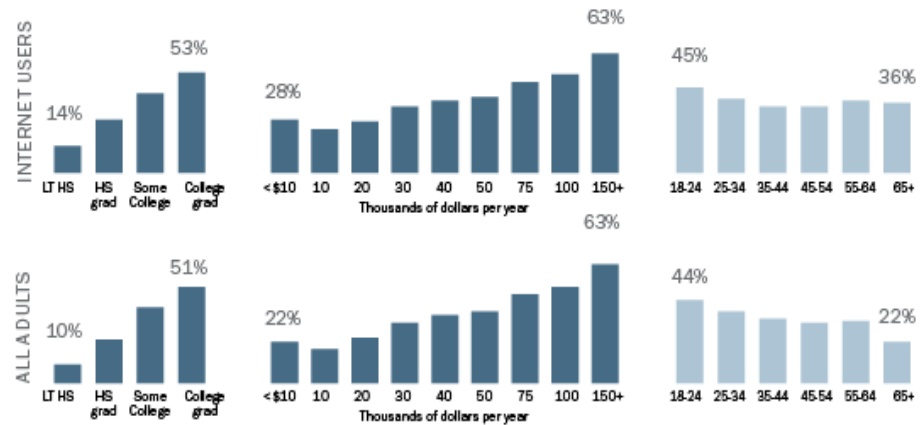
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Communicate/speak out publicly about political issues **offline**



3

Communicate/speak out publicly about political issues **online**



4

Politically active on social networking sites

